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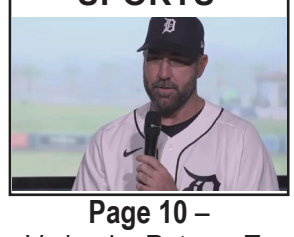
INTERNATIONAL

Page 8
Gordie Howe Bridge delay could cost $7 million a week.

SPORTS



Page 10 –
Verlander Returns To The Tigers

Apoyo de los exmiembros Usher y Big Sean

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit inaugura un nuevo Club en Michigan Central

DETROIT – A principios de este mes, The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit (BGCGD) inauguró oficialmente el Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club, un Club único en su tipo de 15,000 pies cuadrados ubicado dentro de la estación de Michigan Central. La apertura marca un hito para la juventud de Detroit y para BGCGD al entrar en su centenario de servicio, ampliando el acceso al aprendizaje del mundo real, redes de contacto y oportunidades, ahora dentro de un ecosistema de innovación activo.

Este no es un Club tradicional. El Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club es un nuevo modelo de desarrollo juvenil diseñado

Continúa en la página 2

From left: Shaka Senghor; Michigan Central Acting CEO Carolina Pluszczynski; Big Sean; Boys & Girls Club of Greater Detroit President and CEO Shawn Wilson; Usher; and Ilitch Sports + Entertainment President and CEO Ryan Gustafson.

Supported by Former Club Members Usher and Big Sean

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit Opens New Club at Michigan Central

DETROIT – Earlier this month, The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit (BGCGD) officially opened the Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club, a first-of-its-kind, 15,000-square-foot Club located inside The Station at Michigan Central. The opening marks a milestone for Detroit youth and for BGCGD as it enters its 100th year of service, expanding access to real-world learning, network and opportunity, now inside of a live innovation ecosystem.

This is not a traditional Club. The Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club is a new youth development model intentionally designed around access: access to real work,

Continues on page 2

103 días encerrado por ICE en North Lake, Baldwin, Michigan

Por Erick Diaz Veliz

Tras ser arrestado por agentes migratorios, Fernando Ramírez permaneció encarcelado desde finales de setiembre en la prisión de ICE, North Lake, al noroeste de la península baja de Michigan. Pésima organización, mala alimentación y mala atención médica recuentan su experiencia adentro de la instalación.

Avisado por sus hijas desde el exterior, Fernando Ramírez encontró a un muchacho que apenas había entrado al North Lake y que no hablaba inglés. Le ayudó a pedir medicina; lo acompañó a su celda y, preocupado, dejó aviso a un guardia para que le eche vistazos. El guardia nunca se asomó. Cuando Ramírez se acercó por sí mismo, encontró al muchacho convulsionando en el suelo. Pidió a los guardias cercanos la presencia de médicos, pero solo llegaron más oficiales quienes lo estabilizaron y lo hicieron bajar caminando.

"Yo les dije: '¿Qué hacen ustedes aquí? Los que tienen que llegar son médicos, no ustedes'". Me empujaron, me hicieron a un lado", recuerda Ramírez. "Eso no estaba bien, porque les dije: 'Yo estoy haciendo el trabajo de ustedes; ustedes son los que tienen que estar atentos a lo que está pasando, no yo'".

Fernando Ramírez es un cincuentón moreno, bajito y corpulento. Aunque recio y caractoso, Fernando cae bien al instante y hace amigos por donde vaya.

Continúa en la página 4

Fernando Ramirez is now at home in west Michigan after more than 100 days in the Baldwin Detention center.

103 Days Locked Up by ICE in North Lake, Baldwin, Michigan

By Erick Diaz Veliz

After being arrested by immigration agents, Fernando Ramírez remained incarcerated since late September at the ICE facility in North Lake Processing Center, located in the rural northwest side of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Poor organization, inadequate food, and deficient medical care defined his experience inside the facility.

Alerted by his daughters from outside, Ramírez sought out a young man who didn't speak English and had just arrived at North Lake. He helped him request medication; he walked him to his cell and, concerned, asked a guard to keep an eye on him. The guard never showed up. When Ramírez went to check himself, he found the young man convulsing on the floor. He asked nearby guards to call medical staff, but only lieutenants arrived. They stabilized him and made him walk downstairs.

"I told them, 'What are you doing here? The ones who need to come are the medical staff, not you.' They pushed me and moved me aside," Ramírez recalls. "That wasn't right, because I told them, 'I'm doing your job. You're the ones who are supposed to be paying attention to what's happening, not me.'"

Ramírez is a man in his late 50s, hefty, and brown-skinned. Though he carries a feisty character, he is quick to make friends wherever he goes. His daughter,

Continues on page 4

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3 Community
ICE acquires new spaces in Michigan: A Warehouse in Romulus and Office Spaces in Southfield and Grand Rapids

5 Community
Small Business Technology Fund Launched to help 140 Local Businesses Modernize and Compete

6 Small Business
Help Keep Doors Open... Latino small businesses in Minnesota paying the price

7 Contest Winner
2006 Super Bowl Celebrity Photo Contest Winner

8 Gordie Howe Bridge
Report: Michigan-Canada bridge delay could cost up to $7M per week

13 Opinion
The Squalor of the Epstein Class, by Robert Reich

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit Opens New Club

Continued from page 1

real networks, real capital, and real opportunity for social and economic mobility. By embedding high school and college aged youth directly within Michigan Central's innovation district, participants learn and build alongside the people and companies shaping Detroit's future.

"This Club represents an evolution in how opportunity is delivered," said Shawn H. Wilson, President & CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit and Co-Founder, Usher's New Look. "BGCGD's reimagined youth development model moves beyond preparation and into participation and ownership. When young people have proximity to innovation, relationships, and decision-makers, economic mobility stops being abstract and starts becoming achievable."

The Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club offers a suite of immersive, industry-aligned spaces designed to prepare youth ages 14–24 for high-growth careers across the creative economy, technology, and mobility sectors. Core offerings include innovation labs, creative technology studios, special FX labs, autonomous and drone training spaces, a literary and storytelling lounge, and a youth-run retail marketplace that provides real-world experience in brand-building and entrepreneurship. Through hands-on learning, industry credentials, executive mentorship, and paid career pathways, young people move from early exposure to deeper immersion and launch-ready opportunities.

"Michigan Central is building an ecosystem that drives real-world progress and economic opportunity, and developing talent is the key in creating a sustainable, inclusive future," said Carolina Pluszczynski, Acting CEO, Michigan Central. "The work with Boys & Girls Club not only builds on years of work we've done to grow a future-ready talent pipeline but also helps bring our vision forward by embedding youth directly into the same environment where founders, technologists, and creators are building what's next, demonstrating how innovation districts can support earlier, more connected talent development and job placement."

The Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club anchors Michigan Central's dedicated floor for youth, which is designed as a purpose-built asset for the next generation within The Station. With BGCGD's presence and investment at Michigan Central, they will continue to advance their work and also support Michigan Central's long-term approach to talent development that spans youth through adulthood.

Built for Durability, Credibility, and Long-Term Impact

The Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club is further strengthened by the long-term engagement of leaders committed to building durable pathways for young people. The involvement of Usher and Big Sean is not rooted in celebrity, but in credibility, continuity, and shared vision.

Through Usher's New Look and the Sean Anderson Foundation, their foundations and programmatic work will be anchored at the Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club — aligning mentorship, youth development, and opportunity under one roof. Their presence reinforces the Club's commitment to sharing power, relevance, and measurable outcomes.

Two years ago, the Boys & Girls Interior Design Industry Club was given an incredible opportunity to help design the new club space at Michigan Central. This space was designed by youth, will be used by youth, and is empowered by youth through creativity, mentorship, and bold ideas. They incorporated what they wanted to see, feel, and experience in this space. Their vision will help shape the next generation of entrepreneurs and creators.From Facebook.

The strength and clarity of the Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club model has attracted alignment from additional partners across industry, finance, sports, and technology. Organizations including Ilitch Sports + Entertainment, Apple, Bank of America, StockX and nationally acclaimed author and speaker Shaka Senghor are supporting the work because it is outcomes-driven, embedded in the real economy, and built to scale—connecting youth to platforms, skills, and pathways that matter.

Programming at the Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club begins Feb. 9, with opportunities for mentors, partners, and collaborators to engage through the Club and to support the next generation of Detroit talent.

The Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club is the 6th Club location to open under BGCGD.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit inaugura un nuevo Club

Continuado de la página 1

intencionalmente en torno al acceso: acceso a trabajo real, redes reales, capital real y oportunidades reales para la movilidad social y económica. Al integrar a jóvenes de secundaria y edad universitaria directamente dentro del distrito de innovación de Michigan Central, los participantes aprenden y construyen junto a las personas y empresas que están dando forma al futuro de Detroit.

"Este Club representa una evolución en cómo se brindan las oportunidades", dijo Shawn H. Wilson, Presidente y CEO de Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit y Cofundador de Usher's New Look. "El modelo reimaginado de desarrollo juvenil de BGCGD va más allá de la preparación y entra en la participación y el sentido de propiedad. Cuando los jóvenes tienen proximidad a la innovación, a las relaciones y a quienes toman las decisiones, la movilidad económica deja de ser algo abstracto y comienza a ser alcanzable".

El Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club ofrece un conjunto de espacios inmersivos y alineados con la industria, diseñados para preparar a jóvenes de 14 a 24 años para carreras de alto crecimiento en los sectores de la economía creativa, la tecnología y la movilidad. Las ofertas principales incluyen laboratorios de innovación, estudios de tecnología creativa, laboratorios de efectos especiales, espacios de entrenamiento con drones y sistemas autónomos, un salón literario y de narración, y un mercado minorista administrado por los jóvenes que brinda experiencia del mundo real en la creación de marcas y el espíritu empresarial. A través del aprendizaje práctico, credenciales de la industria, mentoría ejecutiva y caminos profesionales remunerados, los jóvenes pasan de una exposición temprana a una inmersión más profunda y oportunidades listas para el lanzamiento.

"Michigan Central está construyendo un ecosistema que impulsa el progreso del mundo real y la oportunidad económica, y el desarrollo de talento es la clave para crear un futuro sostenible e inclusivo", dijo Carolina Pluszczynski, CEO Interina de Michigan Central. "El trabajo con Boys & Girls Club no solo se basa en años de trabajo que hemos realizado para cultivar un talento preparado para el futuro, sino que también ayuda a avanzar nuestra visión al integrar a los jóvenes directamente en el mismo entorno donde fundadores, tecnólogos y creadores están construyendo lo que sigue, demostrando cómo los distritos de innovación pueden apoyar un desarrollo de talento más temprano y conectado, así como la colocación laboral".

El Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club es el punto central del piso dedicado a la juventud en Michigan Central, diseñado como un recurso específico para la próxima generación dentro de la estación. Con la presencia e inversión de BGCGD en Michigan Central, continuarán avanzando en su trabajo y también apoyarán el enfoque a largo plazo de Michigan Central para el desarrollo de talento, que abarca desde la juventud hasta la edad adulta.

Construido para la durabilidad, credibilidad e impacto a largo plazo El Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club se fortalece aún más por el compromiso a largo plazo de líderes dedicados a construir caminos duraderos para los jóvenes. La participación de Usher y Big Sean no se basa en la fama, sino en la credibilidad, la continuidad y una visión compartida.

A través de Usher's New Look y la Sean Anderson Foundation, sus fundaciones y trabajo programático estarán anclados en el Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club — alineando la mentoría, el desarrollo juvenil y la oportunidad bajo un mismo techo. Su presencia refuerza el compromiso del Club de compartir poder, relevancia y resultados medibles.

La fuerza y claridad del modelo del Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club ha atraído la colaboración de socios adicionales en la industria, las finanzas, los deportes y la tecnología. Organizaciones incluyendo Ilitch Sports + Entertainment, Apple, Bank of America, StockX y el autor y orador aclamado nacionalmente Shaka Senghor están apoyando el trabajo porque está orientado a resultados, integrado en la economía real y diseñado para crecer — conectando a los jóvenes con plataformas, habilidades y caminos que importan.

La programación en el Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club comienza el 9 de febrero, con oportunidades para mentores, socios y colaboradores para participar a través del Club y apoyar a la próxima generación de talento de Detroit.

El Michigan Central Boys & Girls Club es la sexta ubicación de Club que abre bajo BGCGD.

Citas destacadas:

Un modelo nacional sin precedentes que integra a la juventud dentro de un ecosistema de innovación.

Sobre Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Detroit (BGCGD) sirve a más de 17,000 jóvenes anualmente y es un líder nacional en el avance de la movilidad económica para los jóvenes. BGCGD ha reimaginado el modelo tradicional de Club para abordar las brechas persistentes de oportunidad al integrar la preparación laboral, el espíritu empresarial, el bienestar mental y el desarrollo de liderazgo en un enfoque cohesivo y orientado a resultados. A través de una programación innovadora y asociaciones intersectoriales, BGCGD equipa a los jóvenes con las diversas formas de capital requeridas para lograr el éxito a largo plazo. Obtenga más información en www.bgcgreaterdetroit.org

Sobre Michigan Central Michigan Central es un centro tecnológico y cultural de 30 acres en Detroit, donde líderes, pensadores, comunidades y creadores se unen para acelerar ideas audaces y tecnologías que dan forma a nuestro futuro colectivo. Al proporcionar acceso a infraestructura, herramientas y recursos de clase mundial, Michigan Central inspira a innovadores y miembros de la comunidad a colaborar en soluciones reales y pioneras para problemas globales. Desde su apertura en abril de 2023, Michigan Central ha crecido hasta convertirse en un ecosistema diverso de casi 250 empresas y emprendimientos que trabajan en la intersección de movilidad, tecnología y sociedad. Obtenga más información en michigancentral.com.

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ICE acquires new spaces in Michigan: A Warehouse in Romulus and Office Spaces in Southfield and Grand Rapids

By Erick Diaz Veliz

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE, has purchased a 261,450-square-foot warehouse at 7525 Cogswell Street in Romulus, around six miles from the Detroit Metro Airport. In Southfield, a federal agency has rented office spaces at Oakland Towne Square near the M-10 and Interstate-696 freeways for ICE legal operations, while in downtown Grand Rapids, new offices will also be leased at the Waters Center.

is expandable up to 360,200 square feet, according to online records.

A Bloomberg report, published on January 29, first listed Romulus as one of 23 locations nationwide where ICE plans to build or convert large warehouse buildings into detention facilities. A Wired report also listed Southfield and Grand Rapids as new places chosen by ICE to expand its legal operations.

The action sparked concerns by the City of Romulus at all levels," McCraight wrote on a Facebook post.

State Senator Darrin Camilleri, Congressman Shri Thanedar, State Rep. Dylan Wegela, and Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, all Democrats, spoke out against ICE and its new places in Michigan. When the Bloomberg report was first published, Camilleri stated that, based on conversations with members of Congress, he didn't find "concrete evidence" of any development plan of an ICE facility in Romulus. Now, he "calls for action to stop ICE detention center."

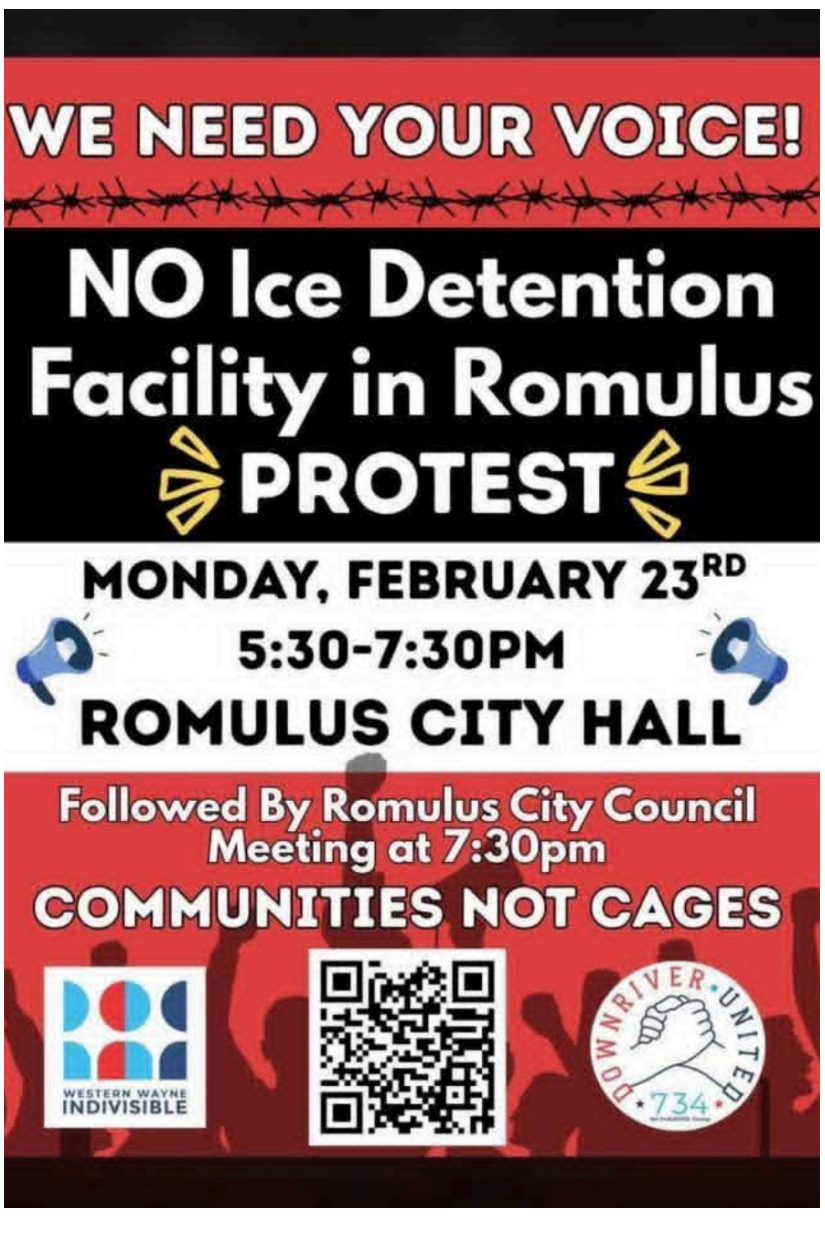
Oakland Towne Square in Southfield, MI. REDICO (Real Estate Development and Investment Company) signed a leased with the U.S General Services Administration (GSA), and it is planned to be used by ICE for general office purposes.

"These will be very well-structured detention facilities meeting our regular detention standards," ICE told the Free Press in a statement. "The Romulus facility and its construction are expected to bring 1,458 jobs to the area and would contribute $149.9 million to GDP. It's also projected to bring in more than $33 million in tax revenue." The Romulus facility

among local elected politicians and activist groups against the ICE expansion in Michigan. Romulus Mayor Robert A. McCraight described the action as "unfortunate information". "I am getting mixed reports on their intended use of this site and continuing to communicate to legislators at all levels that a detention center for any purpose is not permitted and will be opposed

"Let's call this ICE facility what it really is — an ill-constructed jail that would enable ICE to further terrorize our immigrant communities across Southeast Michigan," Camilleri wrote in a statement. "This facility will undermine the work of our local law enforcement, ship in masked agents, and foment chaos throughout our region."

From Washington, D.C., Congressman Shri Thanedar is launching a petition to prevent the construction of any new ICE facilities in Wayne County. "I've spoken with countless constituents from the city who are horrified by the rampant abuse that we've seen from ICE in recent months, and the absolute last thing that they want is for that abuse to come to their backyard,"



The 500-bed Romulus warehouse is part of Washington's efforts to reach its 1 million deported people a year. The Bloomberg report says the Trump administration needs more than 100,000 detention beds, and the planned facilities would house between 500 and 9,500 beds to achieve the goal, with some being the largest of their kind in the country," wrote Thanedar, who is a member of the subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Accountability for Homeland Security.

Michigan currently has five ICE detention centers. Baldwin, Calhoun, Chippewa, Monroe, and St. Clair counties together house approximately 1,719 migrants awaiting deportation or court appearances as of January 22, 2026, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC). Of these, 1,413

Purchased warehouse by ICE at 7525 Cogswell in Romulus, MI.

are housed at the North Lake detention center in Baldwin, the largest one in Michigan and the only one administered by a private company, the GEO Group.

Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, who has repeatedly criticized harsh conditions inside the North Lake facility, condemned ICE one more time. "ICE is now attempting to expand its unwanted presence

Oakland Towne Square in Southfield, MI. REDICO (Real Estate Development and Investment Company)

in Southeast Michigan, with a new office building lease with REDICO in Southfield to intensify their operations against our communities and a new warehouse jail in Romulus to cage hundreds of our neighbors in unsafe conditions," wrote Tlaib in a public statement.

In Southfield, REDICO (Real Estate Development and Investment Company) signed a lease with the U.S General Services Administration (GSA), and it is planned to be used by ICE for general office purposes. REDICO stated to several media outlets that "the lease explicitly prohibits any law enforcement, detention or similar activities to take place on the premises."

"REDICO has a longstanding relationship with GSA, which leases space in several of our Class-A commercial properties across the country for office and administrative use only," REDICO told the Free Press.

The City of Southfield remarked that the leased area is "properly zoned for general office use," and it will be used to carry administrative and legal functions associated with ICE.

"Under Michigan law and local ordinance, the City does not have authority to approve or deny private tenancy decisions when the proposed use complies with existing zoning and regulatory requirements,"

wrote Southfield City in a public statement. "The city has been advised that ICE enforcement officers will not be operating out of this location."

Southfield Mayor Kenson Siver told El Central the city learned about the leasing via online. "The city had absolutely no role in the GSA leasing 7,000 square ft in an office building. It is a private landlord/tenant contract. The building is zoned office," Siver said.

ICE credited the extended funding from the One Beautiful Bill, enacted last July, which now allows it to acquire properties to expand its operations. ICE previously operated with around $6 billion; now, it has a budget of $75 billion that could take up to four years to spend, in addition to its base budget of approximately $10 billion. As Trump's second term and his immigration crackdown progress, ICE is the best-funded law enforcement agency in the United States.

Statement from the Grand Rapids city spokesperson.

"We are aware of social media posts; however, we have no knowledge of ICE having any offices at the Waters Center or looking to rent any offices there.

"From a City perspective, no permits have been pulled at that location since January 1, 2026. There were many permits issued in 2025 and earlier, but at quick glance, none appear connected to the inquiry.

"As long as the primary office use remains similar to an existing use, there would be no reason for additional City approval or a change in use notification."

103 Days Locked Up by ICE

Continued from page 1

Samantha Ramírez, describes him as a man who shares. He came to the United States in the 1980s from Taxco, a small city whose name is in Nahuatl, a native language in Mesoamerica, in the state of Guerrero, Mexico.

How and why did he decide to cross the border in his early 20s? With a nervous laugh, he says he walked across "out of craziness" to improve his quality of life.

"I walked over the hills from Tijuana to San Ysidro. I was young and crazy because I came without any family. Absolutely nothing," he remembers. "I came with some friends, but we split up, and each went our own way."

On Sept. 29, 2025, ICE agents arrested him at the Illinois-Michigan border while he was weighing the truck he was driving. Although he had a valid work permit and no criminal record, he was detained and sent to the Broadway detention center in Chicago, which he described as extremely dirty and overcrowded with immigrants waiting to be processed. The next day, he was transferred to North Lake, where he would spend about 103 days.

Surrounded by metal-wire fences in a wooded, rural area of Lake County, the ICE facility has the capacity to hold 1,800 detainees and is managed by The GEO Group, a private company that operates prisons and detention centers across the country. The company contributed $1 million to former President Donald Trump's 2024 presidential campaign, ABC News reported. And according to MLive, after securing federal contracts to manage ICE detention facilities, it reported profits of $254 million in 2025, compared to $32 million in 2024.

Since opening early last summer, the ICE processing center has received hundreds of immigrants of different nationalities. The population grew from 28 detainees in August 2025 to 1,413 in January 2026, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC), and ICE data shows that as of January 22, 2026, 1,266 inmates have no criminal record. Family members and elected officials have also raised concerns about what they describe as poor oversight, inadequate medical care, and suicide attempts inside the facility.

Nenko Gantchev, a 56-year-old Bulgarian immigrant and small business owner in Chicago, died Dec. 15 at North Lake. Gantchev had Type 2 diabetes. While ICE stated he died of natural causes, his family says his health deteriorated during his 82 days in detention, and they seek a second independent autopsy. Politicians in Illinois and Michigan have called for an independent investigation.

Inside North Lake, Ramírez says detainees are dressed in blue uniforms and given light jackets that do little to keep out the cold, along with blankets that he says caused him allergic reactions. Strict routines governed daily life. As a diabetic, he says proper hygiene and adequate medication were hard to obtain: exposed showers, Tylenol for nearly any pain or symptom, and food as bland and cold as the building itself.

"It was almost always processed chicken with some kind of pasta. Also, rice and beans. No salt. Undercooked. Hard. And the chicken had no flavor either. Everything had no flavor," he recalls.

For diabetics, the daily routine was especially risky and different. Instead of waking at 5:30am for breakfast like the others, they were awakened at 4:30am for blood draws and glucose checks. Medication was inconsistent, he says. The showers were too unsanitary for someone with diabetes, where even a small cut or infection could lead to serious complications.

Regarding these issues of cleanliness, food, and medical care, EL CENTRAL requested comments from GEO Group and ICE; however, no response had been received by the time of publication. Previously, GEO Group told NPR that they respect access to medicine, food, recreation, and religious freedom, and that this care is provided under federal detention standards. After Gantchev's death, ICE said in a public statement that "comprehensive medical care is provided from the moment individuals arrive and throughout the entirety of their stay."

In more than 35 years of living in the United States, Ramírez had not returned to Mexico. He worked, built a community, and created a family, moving to western Michigan in 1997. Still, self-deportation became a desperate option to escape detention. A month in, his daughters placed his name on a voluntary departure list, but neither deportation nor release occurred.

"That was our goal — to go back to Mexico. Even though I want to stay here because all my children were born here. We have our house here. Everything is here. But if I have to go back, why not? I'm not afraid of going back to my country because it's my country," he says.

Outside, his daughters Samantha and Naomi were not only fighting for his release, they also organized a support network called Raíces Migrantes, providing financial assistance for food and phone calls, transportation upon release, and translation help for those who did not speak English. Inside, Ramírez sought out fellow detainees, helping them with phone calls, translation, and encouragement.

Though being separated from his family made him wish time would move faster, he built another kind of family inside, spending his days outside the cells with men with whom he shared, as he puts it, "good things and bad things." A habeas corpus petition eventually secured his release from North Lake. He says that on Jan. 10, when a guard told him he would be freed that day, he was overwhelmed with mixed emotions.

"It's like a cancer that stays in my soul, not in my body, because it changed my whole life," Ramírez says.

He also remembers that, ironically, they were frequently asked to work inside the facility, cleaning or in the kitchen, for $1 a day. "If they have me there, as they say, 'illegal,' why would I go to work? We would refuse. I told them, 'Give me papers, and I'll go to work.'"

Erick Diaz Veliz is a Peruvian reporter based in Lansing, Michigan. He has documents and reports on cultural, social, and political issues in Peru and Michigan as a freelancer. Erick was born in Lima, Peru, and has been living in Lansing since 2018.

This article was made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.

103 días encerrado por ICE

Continuado de la página 1

Su hija, Samantha Ramírez, lo describe como un hombre muy compartido. Él llegó a los Estados Unidos a finales de los 80 desde Taxco, una pequeña ciudad de nombre náhuatl en el Estado de Guerrero, en México.

¿Cómo y por qué decidió cruzar la frontera a los 20 años? Fernando, entre risas, responde que caminando y de locura para mejorar su calidad de vida. "Caminé por el cerro de Tijuana hasta San Isidro. Era joven y loco, porque vine y no tenía familia aquí. Absolutamente nada", recuerda Don Fernando. "Y de locura vine con unos amigos, pero los amigos se separaron; se fueron por su lado."

El 29 de septiembre de 2025, agentes de ICE lo arrestaron en la frontera entre Illinois y Michigan mientras pesaba el tráiler que conducía. Aunque Fernando contaba con permiso de trabajo vigente y sin antecedentes delictivos, lo arrestaron y lo enviaron al centro de detención Broadway en Chicago, lugar que Ramírez describió como extremadamente sucio y sin espacio para los inmigrantes que amontonaban hasta procesarlos. Al día siguiente, dormiría en el centro de procesamiento de ICE North Lake donde pasaría alrededor de 103 días.

Rodeada de alambrada en un área boscosa y rural del condado de Lake, North Lake cuenta con capacidad para albergar a 1800 detenidos y es gestionada por Geo Group, una empresa dedicada a administrar prisiones y centros de detención. La empresa aportó $1 millón a la campaña presidencial de Trump en 2024, reportó ABC News. Y de acuerdo con MLive, tras asegurar contratos federales para administrar centros de detención de ICE, reportó ganancias de 254 millones de dólares en 2025, comparadas con 32 millones en 2024.

Desde su apertura a inicios del verano pasado, el centro de procesamiento de ICE ha recibido a cientos de inmigrantes de distintas nacionalidades. La población creció de 28 detenidos en agosto de 2025 a 1,413 en enero de 2026, según el Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC), y datos de ICE muestran que, al 22 de enero de 2026, 1,266 internos no tienen antecedentes penales. Familiares y funcionarios electos también han expresado preocupaciones sobre lo que describen como supervisión deficiente, atención médica inadecuada e intentos de suicidio dentro de la instalación.

Nenko Gantchev, inmigrante búlgaro de 56 años y propietario de un pequeño negocio en Chicago, murió el 15 de diciembre en North Lake. Gantchev padecía diabetes tipo 2. Aunque ICE afirmó que murió por causas naturales, su familia sostiene que su salud se deterioró durante sus 82 días de detención y busca una segunda autopsia independiente. Políticos de Illinois y Michigan han solicitado una investigación independiente.

Dentro de North Lake, Ramírez cuenta que a todos los visten de azul, con una casaca para el frío que no abriga, unas colchas que, según él, le daban alergia. Bajo estrictas rutinas penitenciarias, Ramírez, diabético, recuerda que la limpieza y el medicamento adecuado son lo último que se puede esperar dentro del recinto: las duchas expuestas, Tylenol para cualquier síntoma o dolencia y la comida tan insípida y fría como el lugar.

"Pues casi siempre era pollo procesado con algún tipo de pasta. Casi siempre era arroz y frijoles. Sin sal. Crudos. Duros. Y el pollo, pues, también sin sabor. Todo sin sabor", recuerda Fernando.

Para los diabéticos, la rutina penitenciaria podía ser peligrosa y ligeramente distinta. Ya no se levantaban a las 5:30 am, como todos, para el desayuno, sino a las 4:30 am para que le saquen sangre y le midan la glucosa. Las medicinas a veces las daban, a veces no; a veces había, a veces no; había que exigirlas. Las duchas eran demasiado sucias para un diabético, por lo que cualquier corte o infección derivaría en complicaciones médicas.

Sobre estos problemas de limpieza, alimentación y atención médica, El Central solicitó comentarios a GEO Group e ICE; sin embargo, al momento de la publicación no había recibido respuesta.

Anteriormente, GEO Group dijo a NPR que respeta el acceso a medicamentos, alimentos, recreación y libertad religiosa, y que esta atención se brinda bajo los estándares federales de detención. Tras la muerte de Gantchev, ICE señaló en un comunicado público que "se proporciona atención médica integral desde el momento en que las personas llegan y durante toda su estadía".

En los más de 35 años viviendo en EE.UU. Fernando no volvió a México. Trabajó, hizo comunidad y formó una familia, con la que se mudó al oeste de Michigan en el 97. No obstante, la autodeportación a la tierra donde nació se convertió en una medida desesperada para salir del encierro. Al mes, sus hijas lo habían inscrito en la lista para que le dieran salida voluntaria, pero ni la autodeportación ni la liberación llegaban a él.

"Esa era ya nuestra meta: que me sacaran para México. Aunque mi propósito es quedarme aquí porque todos mis hijos nacieron aquí. Y, pues, tenemos la casa. Todo lo tenemos aquí. Pero si hay que regresar, ¿por qué no? Nervios no me dan de regresar a mi país porque es mi país", confiesa Fernando.

Desde afuera, sus hijas, Samantha y Naomi, organizaron una red de ayuda llamada Raíces Migrantes que provee apoyo financiero para alimentos y llamadas, transporte cuando son liberados y de comunicación en caso de que no hablen inglés. Adentro, Fernando los localizaba y no los dejaba solos; les ayudaba con sus llamadas, traducción y dándoles ánimo.

Aunque estar separado de su familia le hacía desear que los días pasaran más rápido, Fernando logró crear otra dentro de las instalaciones con quienes pasaba el día fuera de las celdas y con quienes compartió, como él dice, "cosas buenas y malas". Y aunque un hábeas corpus logró finalmente su salida de North Lake, Fernando confiesa que sintió tristeza al dejarlos allí dentro. Él recuerda que ese 10 de enero, después de que el guardia le dijo que ya sería liberado, se volvió loco y lleno de sentimientos encontrados.

"Es como un cáncer que me queda todavía en el alma, no en el cuerpo, porque cambió mi vida, todo", menciona Fernando.

También recuerda que, irónicamente, con frecuencia les pedían trabajar en las instalaciones, ya sea en limpieza o en la cocina. El pago era de un dólar al día. Para Fernando era una esclavitud y un sin sentido. "Si me tienen ahí, como dicen ellos, ilegal, ¿por qué me voy a poner a trabajar? Siempre nos negábamos y decíamos que no teníamos papeles. 'Dame papeles y voy a trabajar'."

Small Business Technology Fund Launched To help 140 Local Businesses Modernize and Compete

The City of Detroit and Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) recently announced the launch of the Detroit Small Business Technology Fund, a new microgrant initiative that will help Detroit's smallest businesses adopt essential technologies, bridge the digital divide, and strengthen long-term economic growth.

Funded through generous support from the Rocket Community Fund, the program will award $1,000 technology grants to 140 Detroit-based microbusinesses with 10 or fewer employees and under $500,000 in annual revenue. Grants may be used for hardware, software, and emerging tech tools that improve daily operations, including laptops, point-of-sale systems, accounting and e-commerce software, and AI platforms.

"Small businesses are the heart of Detroit's economy and they deserve access to the tools that help them grow and succeed," said Mayor Mary Sheffield. "This funding will make it easier for neighborhood small businesses to modernize, reach more customers, and operate more efficiently."

"Strong neighborhoods are anchored by thriving small businesses," said Justin Onwenu, Director of the Office of Small Business Services and Economic Opportunity for the City of Detroit. "When we invest in our small businesses, we invest in the families they support, the jobs they provide, the communities they serve, and the future we are building together."

Administered by DEGC, the Technology Fund will partner with nine trusted business service and neighborhood organizations across the city to identify grantees. Each partner will distribute between 10 and 20 grants. Participating organizations include: the East Warren Development Corp, Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation, Live6 Alliance, Southwest Detroit Business Association, Michigan Black Business Alliance, Arab American Chamber of Commerce, ProsperUS Detroit, TechTown Detroit, and Michigan Women Forward.

"Technology is no longer optional. It is foundational," said Sean Gray, Vice President of Small Business Services for DEGC. "By giving Detroit microbusinesses access to modern tools and connecting them with trusted support organizations, we are strengthening Detroit's local economy from the ground up."

Eligibility is limited to businesses located in the City of Detroit, with 10 or fewer employees, generating under $500,000 in annual revenue, and affiliated with one of the partner organizations. Business service and neighborhood organizations will select grantees and collect data on outcomes such as revenue changes, efficiency gains, digital adoption, new customers, and job creation.

For more information about the fund, visit www.degc.org

Mayor Sheffield, City leaders and the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) announced last week the launch of the Detroit Small Business Technology Fund, a new microgrant initiative that will help Detroit's smallest businesses adopt essential technologies, bridge the digital divide, and strengthen long-term economic growth.

IF YOU INTERACT WITH ICE IN PUBLIC:

1. **Ask if you are free to leave.** If so, you may calmly walk away.
2. You have the **right to refuse consent to a search.**
3. **You have the right to remain silent.** You do not have to discuss your immigration status with anyone, such as about where you were born, whether you are a citizen, or how you entered the country.
4. **If you have valid immigration documents, you should show them.** Never provide fake documents.
5. If you are arrested, say that you wish to **remain silent until speaking with a lawyer.**
6. **You have the right to record your interaction with immigration agents** as long as you do not interfere.

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ATTENTION DETROIT HOMEOWNERS!
Don't miss your chance to ensure your property assessment is fair and accurate.
If you question your property's proposed assessed value on your City of Detroit 2026 Assessment Notice, you have the right to file an appeal.
Three steps to the annual appeal process:
1. Assessors Review (local) OPTIONAL
2. March Board of Review (local) REQUIRED
3. Michigan Tax Tribunal (state)
You have the right to appeal!
Key Deadlines for 2026 Appeals
Assessor Review (Step 1 - Optional): February 1 - February 22, 2026. All appeals must be received (or postmarked if mailed) by February 22, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. EST
March Board of Review (Step 2 - Required): March 4 - March 28, 2026. Petition must be submitted by March 9, 2026
Michigan Tax Tribunal (Step 3) Must file by July 31
For more information go to
detroitmi.gov/assessor
Or call (313) 224-3035
Email us at
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CITY OF DETROIT
Office of the Assessor, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, City of Detroit
Visit us at the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Detroit Taxpayer Service Center, 2 Woodward Ave, Suite 130.
Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Help Keep Doors Open...

Latino small businesses in Minnesota paying the price

Minnesota Latino-owned small businesses in the across the Metro and in Greater Minnesota are hurting right now.

Behind the headlines and uncertainty of this moment, there is a quieter crisis unfolding, one that is deeply personal, deeply local, and deeply consequential for our economy. It is happening on

Main Streets, in neighborhood storefronts, in family-run restaurants, markets, and service shops.

These are Minnesota's Latino-owned small businesses.

For many business owners, the fear is real. Fear of not making payroll. Fear of closing their doors. Fear of losing everything they've worked years to build. Small businesses are more than economic engines; they are community anchors. They provide jobs, gather neighbors, and often represent the dreams of immigrant and working families who took enormous risks to start something of their own.

When small businesses suffer, the ripple effects are immediate: employees lose work, families lose stability, and communities lose essential spaces that bring people together.

That is why the Latino Chamber of Commerce Minnesota and the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC) have joined forces to respond with urgent support.

Together, we have launched the Latino Emergency Small Business Relief Fund, a coordinated effort to provide direct assistance to small businesses experiencing hardship, especially local mom-and-pop and family-owned businesses with limited access to capital.

This fund is rooted in a simple truth: small businesses should not have to weather this moment alone.

LEDC is serving as the fiscal agent and administrator of the fund, ensuring transparency and accountability in how donations are managed and distributed. The Latino Chamber is working closely with LEDC to ensure that support reaches the businesses with the greatest need, those family-owned operations that are most vulnerable during economic disruption. This partnership is about protecting local economies, preserving jobs, and supporting the entrepreneurs who contribute so much to Minnesota's vitality.

The damage to small businesses is not abstract, it is visible in empty tables, reduced hours, postponed expansions, and growing uncertainty about the future. However, payroll, rent, and utilities are still due. These businesses are doing everything they can to hold on, but many are running out of options.

That is where the public can make a difference. Community members in Minnesota, and supporters nationwide, can help Minnesota to the Latino Emergency Small Business Relief Fund. Every donation is an investment in a small business owner's ability to stay open, keep workers employed, and continue serving their neighborhood.

If you have ever loved a corner store, dined in a local restaurant, or felt at home in a small business built with care and sacrifice, this is the moment to show up.

Minnesota's small businesses are hurting. But with collective support, they can weather this moment—and emerge stronger on the other side.

To donate and learn more, visit the Latino Emergency Small Business Relief Fund page and help send Minnesota's small businesses the support they urgently need. Any amount helps.

Latino-owned small businesses are hurting,
but bills are still due.
Help Keep Them Open...
Your donation can help them survive this tough time.
PARTNERSHIP WITH:
LATINO Chamber of Commerce MINNESOTA
FISCAL AGENT:
Latino Economic Development Center
Centro para el Desarrollo Económico Latino

Ayude a Mantener las Puertas Abiertas.

Pequeñas Empresas Latinas en Minnesota Pagando el Precio

Las pequeñas empresas latinas en el área metropolitana y en todo Minnesota están sufriendo en este momento.

Detrás de los titulares y la incertidumbre de este momento, se está desarrollando una crisis más silenciosa—una crisis profundamente personal, profundamente local y profundamente decisiva para nuestra economía. Está ocurriendo en calles principales, en negocios de vecindarios, en restaurantes familiares, mercados y tiendas de servicio.

Estas son las pequeñas empresas latinas de Minnesota.

Para muchos dueños de negocios, el miedo es real. Miedo de no poder pagar la nómina. Miedo de cerrar sus puertas. Miedo de perder todo por lo que han trabajado durante años. Las pequeñas empresas son más que motores económicos: son pilares comunitarios. Proveen empleos, reúnen vecinos y representan los sueños de familias inmigrantes y trabajadoras que asumieron enormes riesgos para construir algo propio.

Cuando las pequeñas empresas sufren, los efectos son inmediatos: los empleados pierden trabajo, las familias pierden estabilidad y las

comunidades pierden espacios esenciales que las unen.

Por eso la Cámara de Comercio Latina de Minnesota y LEDC han unido fuerzas para responder con apoyo urgente.

Juntos, hemos lanzado el Fondo de Ayuda de Emergencia para Pequeñas Empresas Latinas—un esfuerzo coordinado para brindar asistencia directa a pequeñas empresas que enfrentan dificultades, especialmente negocios familiares y comercios con acceso limitado a capital.

Este fondo se basa en una verdad simple: las pequeñas empresas no deberían tener que enfrentar este momento solas.

LEDC actúa como agente fiscal y administrador del fondo, garantizando transparencia y responsabilidad en cómo se manejan y distribuyen las donaciones. La Cámara Latina trabaja estrechamente con LEDC para asegurar que el apoyo llegue a los negocios que más lo necesitan—aquellas operaciones familiares más vulnerables durante la disrupción económica.

Esta colaboración se trata de proteger economías locales, preservar empleos y apoyar a los emprendedores que contribuyen tanto a la vitalidad de Minnesota.

El daño a las pequeñas empresas no es abstracto: se ve en mesas vacías, horas reducidas, expansiones pospuestas y una creciente incertidumbre sobre el futuro. Sin embargo, la nómina, la renta y los servicios aún deben pagarse. Estos negocios están haciendo todo lo posible por resistir, pero muchos se están quedando sin opciones.

Ahí es donde el público puede marcar la diferencia.

Los miembros de la comunidad en Minnesota—y los apoyos a nivel nacional—pueden ayudar donando al Fondo de Ayuda de Emergencia para Pequeñas Empresas Latinas. Cada donación es una inversión en la capacidad de un propietario para mantenerse abierto, mantener empleados trabajando y continuar sirviendo a su vecindario.

Si alguna vez has querido una tienda de la esquina, cenado en un restaurante local o encontrado un hogar en un pequeño negocio construido con sacrificio, este es el momento de presentarte.

Las pequeñas empresas de Minnesota están sufriendo. Pero con apoyo colectivo, pueden superar este momento—y salir más fuertes del otro lado.

Para donar y aprender más, visita la página del Fondo de Ayuda de Emergencia para Pequeñas Empresas Latinas y ayuda a enviar a los pequeños negocios de Minnesota el apoyo urgente que necesitan. Cualquier cantidad ayuda.

Dona aquí: https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-latinoowned-businesses-in-minnesota

Ayuda a Mantanerlos Abiertos
Muchas pequeñas empresas latinas en Minnesota han visto disminuir el flujo de clientes o están temporalmente cerradas, pero las facturas siguen venciendo.
Tu donación puede ayudarles a sobrevivir este momento difícil.
PARTNERSHIP WITH:
LATINO Chamber of Commerce MINNESOTA
FISCAL AGENT:
Latino Economic Development Center
Centro para el Desarrollo Económico Latino

2006 Super Bowl Celebrity Photo Contest Winner

EL CENTRAL Hispanic News appreciates the responses received from our readers and followers to our Super Bowl XL 20th Anniversary photo contest. Photo at right: EL CENTRAL Managing Editor Robert Dewaelsche, right, congratulates Jim Saucedo for submitting the winning entry in the paper's "Name the Detroit Sports Icons" contest. Jim's entry was one of the first received from our readers and he correctly identified all 19 sports figures pictured. Jim received an EL CENTRAL coffee mug and a gift certificate for dinner for two at Taqueria Mi Pueblo. Jim Saucedo is a State Farm Insurance agent located at 5602 W Vernor at Junction in Southwest Detroit. Jim's secret to winning: He and his wife actually attended the game hosted by Detroit at Ford Field in 2006!

EL CENTRAL Super Bowl XL photos by Michael Alberts and Dan Graschuck

The correct identities in the photo are as follows:

1 – Mike Utley
2 – Denny McLain
3 – Grant Long
4 – Igor Larionov
5 – Emmanuel Stewart
6 – Herman Moore
7 – Mickey Redmond
8 – Frank Beckman
9 – Jim Brandstatter
10 – Lynn St James
11 – Thomas Hearns
12 – George Blaha
13 – Marian Ilitch
14 – Vinnie Johnson
15 – John Salley
16 – Jimmy King
17 – Charles Woodson
18 – Lloyd Carr
19 – Bill Laimbeer

De la oficina del Tesorero del Condado de Wayne,
Eric R. Sabree

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Report: Michigan-Canada bridge delay could cost up to $7M per week

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by Paula Gardner, Bridge Michigan • Photos courtesy of the Gordie Howe International Bridge

- Direct losses from delaying opening of the Gordie Howe International Bridge in Detroit could hit $7 million per week, a new study says.
- But the impact could be far greater, given the threat to slow trade, according to the Anderson Economic Group
- The analysis follows President Donald Trump's threat to block the bridge opening

Delaying the opening of the Gordie Howe International Bridge between Michigan and Canada could cost the bridge authority and taxpayers a combined $7 million per week, according to a new analysis.

The findings from the Anderson Economic Group of East Lansing follows President Donald Trump's threat to block the opening, calling for Canada to agree to a litany of unspecified demands as the two nations prepare to renegotiate a sprawling trade pact later this year.

According to the AEG report released Thursday morning, the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority stands to lose $5 million per week if the project is delayed, while the cost to taxpayers for related customs plazas would add up to $2 million to the losses.

"These are direct and unavoidable costs of delay," said Patrick Anderson, a study author and former deputy budget director under Republican Gov. John Engler.

However, the reach of losses could extend much further, Anderson warned.

The direct costs "are only a fraction of the costs to the automotive industry, as well as to the agricultural, tourism, and other industries dependent on efficient crossing of the US-Canada border," Anderson said.

The bridge, which would connect Detroit to Windsor, would be a vital economic artery between the two countries, joining the Ambassador Bridge in Michigan's largest city.

The Gordie Howe bridge has been under construction since 2018 but is expected to open soon. Canada is paying all upfront costs for the bridge, which will be jointly owned with Michigan.

Citing concerns with tariffs on US dairy products, boycotts on US-made liquor and Canadian trade talks with China, Trump warned he would not allow the bridge to open "until the United States is fully compensated for everything we have given (Canada)."

Trump's comments generated blowback, leading to some reports that he may rethink the strategy.

Concerns came from several Michigan Democrats and former Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, a Republican who played a key role in negotiating the project. He refuted Trump claims that the bridge deal was unfair to the US.

Several Michigan Republicans, including House Speaker Matt Hall, R-Richland Township, have said they consider Trump's warning appropriate leverage.

If the bridge is delayed, "much of the burden will fall on Canadian lenders, businesses, and taxpayers," Anderson said. "However, taxpayers in the United States and residents of the state of Michigan, which under the International Crossing Agreement will own a 50% interest in the Bridge, will also bear part of the cost."

Earlier studies by AEG determined long-term economic benefits of a new bridge crossing as well as the large economic significance of existing border crossings, including the Ambassador Bridge in Detroit-Windsor and the Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron-Sarnia.

The significance is due in part to the automobile industry, notably assembly and parts plants in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Kentucky.

Effects from blocking the bridge will carry "tremendous consequences" for Michigan and the US, warned Sandy Baruah, president and CEO of the Detroit Regional Chamber.

The Chamber and others already have noted they are bracing for this year's federal review of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, a trade pact Trump signed during his first term. Bloomberg recently reported that Trump has privately discussed withdrawing from the pact.

"The U.S.-Canada trade relationship and economies have been successfully intertwined for well over a century, benefiting both sides of our shared border," Baruah said in a statement this week.

"As Americans, we need to lean into and build off this relationship to maintain our global competitiveness and create jobs and economic growth."

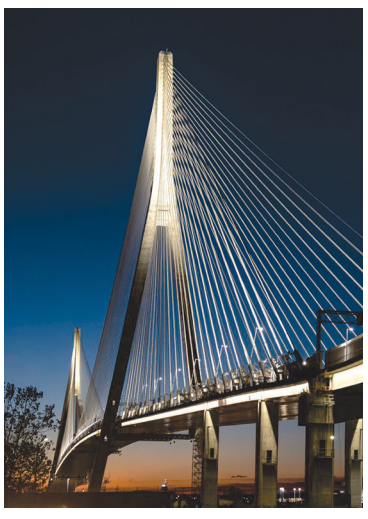
Baruah called the bridge "the most consequential infrastructure project in the state and region of this generation."

Anderson agreed.

"The potential costs of delay, while significant, are also a tiny fraction of (the bridge's) value," he said. "For this and other reasons, we remain confident of its economic viability even if its opening is delayed. "

AEG's analysis comes with limitations, Anderson said, including the lack of posted toll costs and the costs for US Customs to operate its onsite plaza.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Paula Gardner directs the business reporting on Bridge, writing much of it and setting the strategy for how statewide business coverage fits into Bridge's nonpartisan policy-driven editorial mix. Paula came to Bridge in 2020 after several years at MLive.com, where she covered the state on both business and environmental teams. Prior to that, she was editor of the Ann Arbor News and news director of online startup AnnArbor,com, and also focused on business news as an editor and reporter at Michigan Business Review. Born and raised in metro Detroit, Paula moved to Ann Arbor to attend the University of Michigan, and has lived in the city for 20 years with her husband, who grew up in their neighborhood. Paula also regularly visits East Lansing and Grand Rapids to visit her college-aged children. She can be reached at pgardner@bridgemi.com

Three reasons the Gordie Howe Bridge is worth a fight

by Stephen Henderson, Bridge Detroit • Photos courtesy of the Gordie Howe International Bridge

Editor's note: This story first appeared in Stephen Henderson's "I Have Questions" Substack. Henderson is the founder and executive advisor for BridgeDetroit. It was also published by BridgeDetroit, a nonprofit and nonpartisan news organization. Visit the newsroom online: bridgedetroit.com.

It has been at least a 14-year journey from concept to almost-open for the Gordie Howe Bridge across the Detroit River.

Fourteen years of forging an unusual deal, wrangling state, federal and international bureaucracy, community negotiations and input, and a painstaking, arduous site preparation and construction.

No shock, then, that backs are up over a threatened delay to the bridge opening from President Donald Trump, at the last minute.

I'll leave it to others to unpack the politics of the president conditioning the bridge opening (scheduled for later this year) to a resolution of his trade beefs with Canada.

But let's talk policy. And facts.

The compelling reasons for this bridge, and the journey we took to get here, mean we can't lose the moment.

Time and effort

As I point out above, this project has been around 14 years in the making, and there was nothing foregone about it from the beginning.

By way of reference, it took only about three and a half years to build the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco — in the 1930s during the Great Depression.

The Mighty Mack which spans the straits between Michigan's lower and upper peninsula, was a 4-year project — in the 1950s.

The Gordie Howe is a 21st-century international crossing, and a sweeping endeavor whose size and scale overwhelm the logistics and planning necessary for other historical examples. Its design mandated the construction of 12 other highway-crossing bridges, just on the American side.

When Republican Gov. Rick Snyder began pushing the idea of a second bridge across the river at the Mackinac Policy Conference in 2011, he met immediate blowback: from the Moroun family that owns the Ambassador Bridge, which has been the only above-water crossing of the Detroit River since the 1930s; and from his own party in the state legislature.

Snyder's solution was creative, elegant and risky: He forged an agreement between Michigan and Canada that avoided using state funds. Canada agreed to fund the bridge construction and recoup its costs through tolls. Canada's contribution would leverage billions in federal support, so the project wouldn't need Michigan money.

That was in 2012, and it still took six more years to get to the point of site preparation and land acquisition. It took another year after that to get a bill through Congress to pay for the U.S.-side customs plazas.

Then the pandemic struck and delays pushed the beginning of actual construction to 2022. The very fact that construction crews physically completed the span last year is a moment of uncanny and tremendous success that can't reasonably be set aside.

And now here we are, just months from the opening of the bridge.

More delays disrespect the uncanny and tremendous will and effort that brought us this far. So many times, we've tripped over our own feet while walking toward progress. This time, we've gotten it right, finally.

There's no way it makes sense to derail us when we're this close.

The need for two

Since the Ambassador Bridge was constructed in 1931, the Detroit River has had just one over-water car crossing to Canada.

It's nowhere near enough.

Just for comparison, let's talk about Buffalo, another city that sits across from Canada. The Buffalo metro area population is a quarter the size of Detroit's, and while it is home to a growing economy in health care and technology, it is dwarfed by Detroit's automotive and related technology sectors.

But Buffalo has five spans across the Niagara River; some carry cars, some carry trains, and one does both.

Here, the Ambassador is complemented by the Windsor Tunnel, a two-lane underwater crossing that's not accessible to much of the truck traffic that crosses every day, and a second, rail-only bridge.

Detroit is the nation's busiest northern border crossing, and that fact alone supports the idea for the Gordie Howe Bridge.

The Ambassador handles 8,800-10,000 trucks a day, but dumps them out on the Canada side on busy streets, causing serious congestion. On the Detroit side, the bridge connects to a recent project that is supposed to expedite traffic to nearby highways, but the volume still causes back-ups and delays.

The Gordie Howe will add crucial capacity — a 1.5-mile span with six lanes and dedicated pedestrian and bike paths. And its location, along with the construction of critical highway access infrastructure, will change the picture considerably on both sides of the border.

Beyond trade, the second span will boost U.S. security concerns: It is wildly unlikely that two bridges could fail simultaneously.

And its public ownership — shared between Canada and the United States — contrasts importantly with the Ambassador's private structure. The Ambassador is the only international crossing in the world that's privately owned. That means at any time, its owners can put their interests above the public's, which is inherently dangerous.

Money, money, money

The Ambassador Bridge is losing trade traffic, which means Detroit and the region are losing our trade advantage.

With the auto industry's needs, and the opportunity for growth in logistics, just-in-time delivery and other 21st-century economic developments, the Gordie Howe represents the best option to reclaim what's slipping away.

In 2024, the Ambassador recorded one of its worst years in incoming and overall truck traffic, according to federal data and the Bridge and Tunnel Operators Association, which tracks traffic in Detroit.

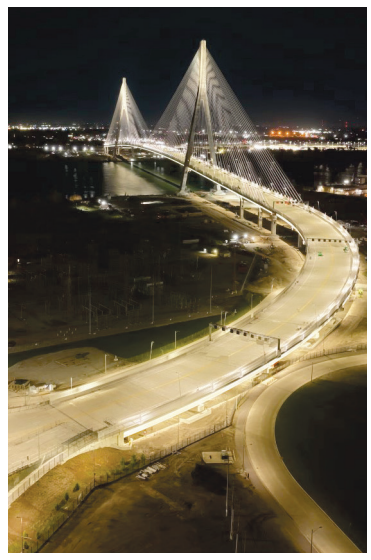
Traffic has been moving from the 83-year-old Ambassador Bridge to the Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron, which saw traffic grow 35% between 2023 and 2025. It's 90 minutes away from Detroit, but the added distance is becoming preferable to dealing with the Ambassador's shortcomings: long lines, high tolls, difficult transitions to highways on both sides of the border.

Port Huron isn't outfitted to deal well with the jump in traffic, either. Back-ups sometimes stretch to 20 miles, and a planned investment in infrastructure to deal with growing capacity is years away.

The Gordie Howe was constructed explicitly to ease trade across the border, and to grow it. That's why the Canadian government agreed to foot the bill for the bridge, and why political leadership on the American side worked so hard, and so long, to get it built.

We've already spent the political capital. Canada has already spent the money. The steel is already in the air.

The only question left is whether we are serious about being the economic gateway we say we are.



Stephen Henderson is a native Detroiter who has nearly 30 years of journalism experience as a writer and editor, and a deep-rooted connection with the city that birthed him.

A winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and a two-time winner of both the Scripps Howard and ASNE national awards for opinion writing, Henderson has also won more than two dozen national awards for writing and editing. He was honored in 2014 as Journalist of the Year by the National Association of Black Journalists.

Shields Returns to LCA This Sunday

EL CENTRAL
HISPANIC NEWS
SPORTS
Sports Editor: Dan Graschuck/ EL CENTRAL

Ads by Salita Promotions, photo by Dan Graschuck/ EL CENTRAL PHOTOGRAPHER

World Champion, Clarresa Sheilds, returns to the LCA (Little Cearsers Arena) this Sunday, February 22nd, to defend her championship against Franchon Crews-Dezurn.

The bouts begin at 4:30 pm, with DAZN cable coverage starting at 8 pm

Taqueria El Rey Wrestling

Photos by Adam J. Dewey/ EL CENTRAL

This Sunday, at Taqueria El Rey restaurant, in Mexicantown Detroit, the IBW wrestling association will present a professional wrestling show. The doors will open at 3 pm, with the bouts starting at 4 pm, the price of tickets is $ 15 dollars.

EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS
Pateando la No. 5
SPORTS

An Early Look At The World Cup Groups

David Levine
EL CENTRAL

The FIFA World Cup playoffs will take place at the end of March. Those games in Europe and Mexico will fill out the last six spots in this summer's tournament. All three host countries will have to wait until then to know which opponents will complete their first round groups. Six groups are already complete. Let's take a brief look at three of them.

Group C has Brazil, Scotland, Morocco, and Haiti. It's a random selection of styles and cultures. Brazil, a country whose success the other three can only dream about, still sets the standard. Even though the Selecao hasn't won the World Cup since 2002, the famous yellow shirts carry great influence. For some players, the weight of the shirt proves to be too much. Managers come and go, but for the first time, Brazil will have a non-Brazilian coach. Carlo Ancelotti has had incredible success at the club level across Europe, most recently at Real Madrid, where the Brazilian contingent expressed their desire to have him take over the national team. With dozens of players from all the top leagues to choose from, Ancelotti will do as he did in Spain and focus on man-management more than tactics and sophisticated analysis.

Scotland hasn't been to a World Cup since 1998 and it didn't go well as they exited France after three losses. For the Tartan Army, a collective spirit will carry them on a wave of support as great as any country. They do have a player who will bear watching. Napoli's Scott McTominay, occasionally called "McTom-Pele" due to his tremendous performances in Serie A, leads the midfield. He will need a lot of help, though. Morocco made the semifinals in 2022, the first African country to reach the final four. They have almost their entire team back with four more years of experience. Haiti hasn't been to the World Cup since 1974. They represent the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, a gang-ridden island that hasn't been able to host its national team in years. They will have a lot of support in the United States where many Haitians have fled. Haiti won't be expected to advance, but their opponents will have to put in a professional performance to earn all three points against them.

Germany will be expected to cruise through Group E. Given their revival in form under Julian Nagelsmann, their supporters will be dreaming of a long run this summer. Teenage sensation Lennart Karl of Bayern Munich will be pushing the veterans for a place in the team. Nagelsmann will have to decide at what point of the tournament to unleash this new talent. But, he faces a bigger decision when choosing a goalkeeper. Aging Manuel Neuer has had an injury-riddled season, while the next best goalkeeper, Marc Ter Stegen, has barely played in a year due to a back problem and other issues. Germany will never be an easy out, but it would be a reach to consider them among the favorites this year.

Ecuador, the Ivory Coast, and Curacao make up the rest of the group. This will be a battle. Curacao, considered a CONCACAF minnow, won't give up anything easily. Most of their team plays in Europe, primarily in the Netherlands where there is a large expatriate community. Ecuador has one of the world's stingiest defenses, one against which the USA scored twice in November. They have big, athletic players who will not wilt in the summer heat. The Ivory Coast won't have issues with the heat either. Plenty of Ivorians play for big clubs across Europe, but one has experience in the United States. Forward Wilfried Zaha is in his second year at Charlotte FC of MLS. His insights could be useful to their preparations.

Perhaps one of the weakest groups will be Group G. An aging Belgian team earned the top seed through past performances. However, star midfielder Kevin DeBruyne has rarely been at full strength for Napoli this season. He and striker Romelu Lukaku are past 30 now and showing the effects of injuries over the long term. Can they raise themselves to give the so-called Golden Generation deep run? If star goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois can pull off some magical performances, maybe. Their defense is thin and the midfield beyond DeBruyne isn't brimming with young talent either.

What will help Belgium is that they received a generous draw. Egypt, Iran, and New Zealand won't pose much of a threat. Egypt looks like the toughest opponent with Liverpool's 33 year old Mohammed Salah leading their attack supported by Manchester City's reserve forward Omar Marmoush. Expect the three non-seeded teams to sit back and try to hit Belgium on the counterattack. Iran has always played that way. New Zealand, especially if Nottingham Forest striker Chris Wood isn't fit, will be overwhelmed. This group, more than most of the others, could be a toss-up between three teams, none of which are a contender to make a long run in the tournament.

Next week we will take a look at groups H, J, and L where three of the favorites will be looking to get off to a solid start and a long stay in North America.

Detroit Tigers 2026 Pitchers

Photos by Detroit Tigers/ MLB

The Detroit Tigers have started Spring training in Lakeland, Florida, in preparation for the 2026 MLB season. The big news and addition the Tigers have made was bringing Justin Verlander back with a 1 year contract, looking to make a run to the playoffs and World Series. Tigers have also added Framber Valdez to the pitching lineup.

(L-R) Jack Flaherty, Casey Mize, Framber Valdez, Tarik Skubal, and Justin Verlander

Justin Verlander returns to the Tigers on a 1 year contract

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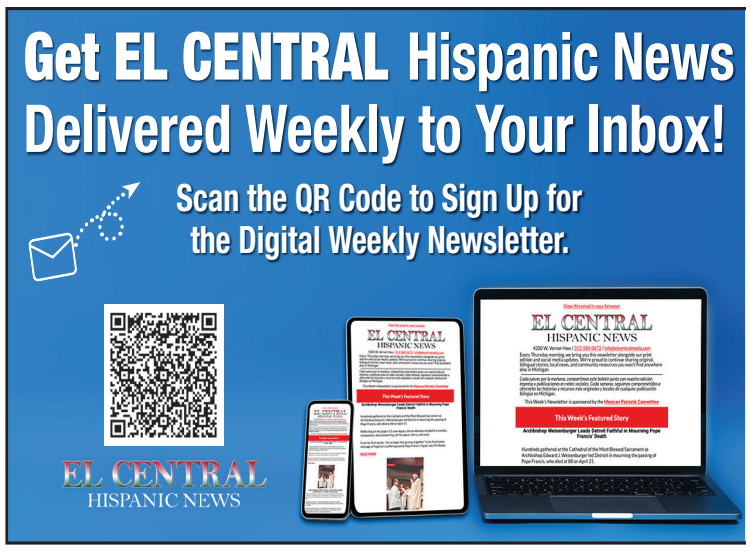
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DETROIT-WAYNE JOINT BUILDING AUTHORITY

Request for Proposals

The Detroit-Wayne Joint Building Authority owner/operator of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center (CAYMC) is seeking proposals from interested firms to provide the following services:

- **Buildout of two ADA compliant restrooms**
- **Replacement of subterranean expansion joint and waterproofing system**

The CAYMC is a 745,000 square foot office building located in the heart of downtown Detroit.

Mandatory pre-bid meetings will be held on the 13th floor in Erma Henderson Auditorium located in CAYMC on Wednesday, March 5, 2026, at the following times:

- **ADA Restrooms – 12:30 pm**
- **Expansion Joint – 1:30 pm**

RFP's may be obtained by emailing to: mike.kennedy@hines.com
Interested firms must submit three (3) sealed proposals and one electronic copy no later than 12:00 Noon Friday, March 13th, 2026. A public bid opening will be held immediately after the deadline.

Address proposals to:

Detroit - Wayne Joint Building Authority
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1316
Detroit, MI 48226
Attention: Mike Kennedy, General Manager
(Please label envelope with either "ADA Restrooms" or "Expansion Joint")

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HISPANIC NEWS

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EDITORIAL OPINION

Guest Opinion:

The Squalor of the Epstein Class

By Robert Reich

Here's how Kentucky Republican Congressman Thomas Massie responded on Sunday, during ABC's "This Week," to a question about the Trump regime's handling of the Epstein files:

"This is about the Epstein class …. They're billionaires who were friends with these people, and that's what I'm up against in Washington, D.C. Donald Trump told us that even though he had dinner with these kinds of people, in New York City and West Palm Beach, that he would be transparent. But he's not. He's still in with the Epstein class. This is the Epstein administration. And they're attacking me for trying to get these files released."

The Epstein Class. Not just the people who cavorted with Jeffrey Epstein or the subset who abused young girls. It's an interconnected world of hugely rich, prominent, entitled, smug, powerful, self-important (mostly) men. Trump is honorary chairman.

Trump appears 1,433 times in the Epstein files so far. His billionaire backers are also members. Elon Musk appears 1,122 times. Howard Lutnick is a member. So is Trump-backer Peter Thiel (2,710 times), and Leslie Wexner (565 times). As is Steven Witkoff, now Trump's envoy to the Middle East, and Steve Bannon, Trump's consigliere (1,855 times).

The Epstein Class isn't limited to Trump donors. Bill Clinton is a member (1,192 times), as is Larry Summers (5,621 times). So are LinkedIn founder Reid Hoffman (3,769 times), Prince Andrew (1,821 times), Bill Gates (6,385 times), and Steve Tisch, co-owner of the New York Giants (429 times).

If not politics, what connects the members of the Epstein Class? It's not just riches. Some members are not particularly wealthy, but they're richly connected. They trade on their prominence, on whom they know and who will return their phone calls.

They exchange inside tips on stocks, on the movements of currencies, on IPOs, on new tax-avoidance mechanisms. On getting into exclusive clubs, reservations at chic restaurants, lush hotels, exotic travel.

They entertain one another, stay at each other's guest houses and villas. Some exchange tips on how to procure certain drugs or kinky sex or valuable works of art. And, of course, how to accumulate more wealth.

Most members of the Epstein Class have seceded into their own small, self-contained, squalid world. They are disconnected from the rest of society. Most don't particularly believe in democracy; Peter Thiel (recall, he appears 2,710 times in the Epstein files) has said he "no longer believes that freedom and democracy are compatible."

Many are putting their fortunes into electing people who will do their bidding. Hence, they are politically dangerous.

The Epstein Class is the by-product of an economy that emerged over the last two decades, from which this new elite has siphoned off vast amounts of wealth.

It's an economy that bears almost no resemblance to that of mid-20th-century America. The most valuable companies in this new economy have few workers because they don't make stuff. They design it. They create ideas. They sell concepts. They move money.

The value of businesses in this new economy isn't in factories, buildings, or machines. It's in algorithms, operating systems, standards, brands, and vast, self-reinforcing user networks.

I remember when IBM was the nation's most valuable company and among its largest employers, with a payroll in the 1980s of nearly 400,000. Today, Nvidia is nearly 20 times as valuable as IBM was then and five times as profitable (adjusted for inflation), but it employs just over 40,000. Nvidia, unlike the old IBM, designs but doesn't make its products.

Over the past three years, Google parent Alphabet's revenue has grown 43 percent while its payroll has remained flat. Amazon's revenue has soared, but it's eliminating jobs.

Members of the Epstein Class are paid in shares of stock. As corporate profits have soared, the stock market has

roared. As the stock market has roared, the compensation of the Epstein Class has reached the stratosphere.

Meanwhile, most Americans are trapped in an old economy where they depend on shrinking paychecks and a diminishing number of jobs. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York just reported that mortgage delinquency rates for lower-income households are surging.

Affordable housing isn't a problem that occurs to the Epstein Class. Nor is income inequality. Nor the loss of our democracy. Nor the deleterious effects of social media on young people and children.

When Silicon Valley's biggest tech proponent in Congress — Rep. Ro Khanna — recently announced his support for a tax on California billionaires, to help fill the void created by Trump's cuts in Medicare (which, in turn, made way for Trump's second huge tax cut for the rich), the Epstein Class had a fit.

Vinod Khosla, one of Silicon Valley's most prominent venture capitalists, with a net worth estimated at more than $13 billion (and who's mentioned a mere 182 times in the Epstein files but is no friend of Trump), called Khanna a "commie comrade."

Khosla, by the way, is best known by the public for having purchased 89 acres of California beachfront property in in 2008 for $32.5 million, then trying to block public access to the ocean with a locked gate and signs. Despite losing multiple court rulings, including a 2018 Supreme Court appeal, he carries on with the dispute.

Not classy, but, shall we say, a typical Epstein Class move.

Opinions in this column are not necessarily those of the Publisher or Editor

Do you have a contrary opinion? Write us at info@elcentralmedia.com

OPINIÓN EDITORIAL

Opinión de un invitado:

El miseria de la clase Epstein

Por Robert Reich

Así respondió el congresista republicano de Kentucky, Thomas Massie, el domingo, durante el programa "This Week" de la cadena ABC, a una pregunta sobre la gestión de los archivos de Epstein por parte del régimen de Trump:

"Se trata del grupo Epstein… Son multimillonarios que eran amigos de esta gente, y a eso me enfrento en Washington, D.C. Donald Trump nos dijo que, aunque cenara con este tipo de personas en Nueva York y West Palm Beach, sería transparente. Pero no lo es. Sigue vinculado al grupo Epstein. Esta es la administración Epstein. Y me atacan por intentar que se publiquen estos archivos".

El grupo Epstein. No solo las personas que se codearon con Jeffrey Epstein ni el subgrupo que abusó de niñas. Es un mundo interconectado de hombres inmensamente ricos, prominentes, con derecho a todo, engreídos, poderosos y engreídos (en su mayoría). Trump es el presidente honorario.

Trump aparece 1433 veces en los archivos de Epstein hasta la fecha. Sus multimillonarios patrocinadores también son miembros. Elon Musk aparece 1122 veces. Howard Lutnick es miembro. También lo son Peter Thiel, partidario de Trump (2710 veces), y Leslie Wexner (565 veces). Al igual que Steven Witkoff, ahora enviado de Trump a Oriente Medio, y Steve Bannon, consejero de Trump (1855 veces).

La Clase Epstein no se limita a los donantes de Trump. Bill Clinton es miembro (1192 veces), al igual que Larry Summers (5621 veces). También lo son Reid Hoffman, fundador de LinkedIn (3769 veces), el príncipe Andrés (1821 veces), Bill Gates (6385 veces) y Steve Tisch, copropietario de los New York Giants (429 veces).

Si no es la política, ¿qué conecta a los miembros de la Clase Epstein? No es solo la riqueza. Algunos miembros no son particularmente ricos, pero tienen conexiones importantes. Se aprovechan de su prominencia, de a quién conocen y de quién les devolverá las llamadas.

Intercambian información privilegiada sobre acciones, movimientos cambiarios, ofertas públicas iniciales (OPI) y nuevos mecanismos de evasión fiscal. Sobre cómo entrar en clubes exclusivos, reservar en restaurantes elegantes, hoteles lujosos y viajes exóticos.

Se entretienen mutuamente, se alojan en casas de huéspedes y villas. Algunos intercambian consejos sobre cómo conseguir ciertas drogas, sexo erótico u obras de arte valiosas. Y, por supuesto, cómo acumular más riqueza.

La mayoría de los miembros de la clase Epstein se han recluido en su propio mundo pequeño, aislado y miserable. Están desconectados del resto de la sociedad. La mayoría no cree particularmente en la democracia; Peter Thiel (recordemos que aparece 2710 veces en los archivos de Epstein) ha dicho que "ya no cree que la libertad y la democracia sean compatibles".

Muchos invierten su fortuna en elegir a personas que cumplan sus órdenes. Por lo tanto, son políticamente peligrosos.

La clase Epstein es el subproducto de una economía que surgió en las últimas dos décadas, de la cual esta nueva élite ha desviado enormes cantidades de riqueza.

Es una economía que prácticamente no se parece a la de Estados Unidos a mediados del siglo XX. Las empresas más valiosas de esta nueva economía tienen pocos trabajadores porque no fabrican. Lo diseñan. Crean ideas. Venden conceptos. Transfieren dinero.

El valor de las empresas en esta nueva economía no reside en fábricas, edificios ni máquinas. Está en algoritmos, sistemas operativos, estándares, marcas y vastas redes de usuarios que se retroalimentan.

Recuerdo cuando IBM era la empresa más valiosa del país y una de las que más empleos daba, con una nómina en la década de 1980 de casi 400.000 empleados. Hoy, Nvidia es casi 20 veces más valiosa que IBM entonces y cinco veces más rentable (ajustada a la inflación), pero emplea a poco más de 40.000 personas. Nvidia, a diferencia de la antigua IBM, diseña, pero no fabrica sus productos.

En los últimos tres años, los ingresos de Alphabet, la empresa matriz de Google, han crecido un 43%, mientras que su nómina se ha mantenido estable. Los ingresos de Amazon se han disparado, pero están eliminando empleos.

Los miembros de la Clase Epstein reciben sus salarios en acciones. A medida que las ganancias corporativas se han disparado, el mercado de valores se ha disparado. Con el alza del mercado de valores, la compensación de la Clase Epstein ha alcanzado cifras astronómicas.

Mientras tanto, la mayoría de los estadounidenses están atrapados en una economía anticuada, donde dependen de salarios cada vez más bajos y de la disminución del número de empleos. El Banco de la Reserva Federal de Nueva York acaba de informar que las tasas de morosidad hipotecaria de los hogares con bajos ingresos están aumentando.

La vivienda asequible no es un problema que afecte a la Clase Epstein. Tampoco lo es la desigualdad de ingresos. Ni la pérdida de nuestra democracia. Ni los efectos nocivos de las redes sociales en los jóvenes y los niños.

Cuando el mayor defensor de la tecnología de Silicon Valley en el Congreso, el representante Ro Khanna, anunció recientemente su apoyo a un impuesto a los multimillonarios de California, para ayudar a llenar el vacío creado por los recortes de Trump a Medicare (que, a su vez, dieron paso al segundo gran recorte de impuestos de Trump para los ricos), la clase de Epstein tuvo un ataque.

Vinod Khosla, uno de los capitalistas de riesgo más destacados de Silicon Valley, con un patrimonio neto estimado en más de 13 mil millones de dólares (y que solo aparece mencionado 182 veces en los archivos de Epstein, pero no es amigo de Trump), llamó a Khanna un "camarada comunista".

Khosla, por cierto, es más conocido por haber comprado 89 acres de terreno frente al mar en California en 2008 por 32,5 millones de dólares, y luego intentar bloquear el acceso público al océano con una puerta cerrada y letreros. A pesar de perder múltiples fallos judiciales, incluyendo una apelación ante la Corte Suprema en 2018, continúa con la disputa.

Poco elegante, pero, digamos, una jugada típica de la clase Epstein.

Las opiniones expresadas en esta columna no son necesariamente las del editor o redactor

¿Tienes una opinión contraria? Escríbenos a info@elcentralmedia.com

Special World's Cultures

Belize

Caye Caulker Caye

Caye Caulker or Cayo Corker in Spanish, is the name of one of the small islands in the maritime territory of Belize. It is known for its reefs, where diving to enjoy the marine wonders is the perfect respite from the monotony of city life, where winter can be harsh.

Caye Caulker boasts a colorful village where spring and festivity reign, thanks to the tranquility that emanates from the bohemian and welcoming atmosphere of this small island, measuring 8 km by 2 km.

Caye Caulker is a place to refresh with new friendships. People tends to visit in times when the can't slow down in their own life, until they visit Caye Caulker, since the motto of the city is "go slow".

Ambergris Caye

Ambergris Caye is the largest island in Belize, with a population of 2,000. Ambergris Caye boasts one of the most famous beaches, San Pedro, with its white Caribbean sand.

Hiking along the island, which is only 45 miles long, allows you to explore the entire territory in a week.

Like most of Belize's marine territory, diving is a major activity on Ambergris Caye, not only for its beauty but also because it is home to the second largest barrier reef in the world.

It is common to find areas where you can swim with nurse sharks. Although it may seem like a scary idea, the experience is not distressing, as nurse sharks do not attack humans.

Another popular activity on Ambergris Caye is fishing for tarpon, bonefish, and pompano.

Sigue cada semana en
EL CENTRAL Hispanic News
ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO,
by Mariana Ayón RV

Belize, with its colorful cities and towns, islands and beaches, is the only country in Central America where English is the official language. However, Spanish is spoken by more than half the population, as are Belizean Creole English, Garifuna, and Belizean Mayan. Belize borders Mexico and Guatemala.

The country's current territory has been inhabited since 1500 BC by the Maya, later influenced by Europeans from 1492, initially by the Spanish, and subsequently by the British after their victory at the Battle of St. George's Caye in 1798. Although it has been considered an independent country since 1981, it remains a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, which makes it dependent on the British monarchy.

Its capital was Belize City, home to the country's most important Catholic cathedral, the Holy Redeemer Cathedral. Although the capital is currently the city of Belmopan.

Breadfruit

Breadfruit is a fruit native to coastal regions and is prepared in various ways in Belize. It has a spongy, starchy texture similar to that of a potato. It can be used to make bread by drying and grinding it into flour. It can also be fried as a potato.

It is a staple food in the regions where it grows because the fruit can be used at all stages of its development.

ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO

Belice

Cayo Corker

Cayo Corker en español, o bien, Caye Caulker en inglés es el nombre de una de las islas del territorio marítimo de Belice, y es conocida por sus arrecifes donde bucear para disfrutar de las maravillas marinas es el esplendor que uno quiere disfrutar para descansar de la monotonía de la vida en la ciudad donde el invierno puede ser inclemente. Cayo Corker cuenta con un pueblo lleno de colores, donde la primavera y lo festivo imperan debido a la tranquilidad que se emana en el ambiente bohemio y acogedor de esta pequeña isla de 8 km por 2 km.

Cayo Corker es un lugar que las personas suelen visitar cuando no pueden bajar su propio ritmo de vida en los lugares en que viven, así que una visita a Cayo Corker es la receta, pues su eslogan es "ve lento".

Cayo Ámbar Gris

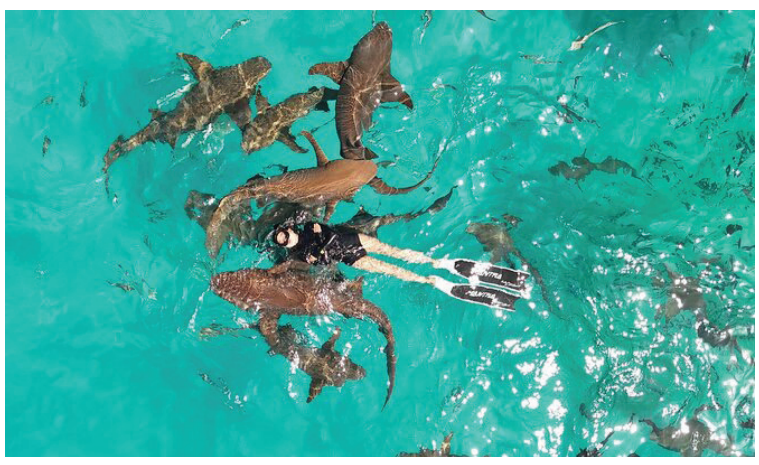
El Cayo Ámbar Gris, en inglés, Ambergris Caye, es la isla más grande de Belice con una población de 2,000 habitantes. En Cayo Ámbar Gris se encuentra una de las playas más conocidas que es San Pedro, con su arena blanca caribe.

Las caminatas a lo largo de la isla de tan sólo 45 millas permite que en una semana se pueda disfrutar de todo el territorio.

Como la mayoría del territorio marítimo de Belice, también en Ámbar Gris el buceo es una actividad importante no sólo por la belleza, sino porque es la segunda barrera más grande de arrecifes en el mundo.

Es común encontrar las zonas donde se puede nadar con tiburones nodrizas, aunque pueda parecer una idea espeluznante, la experiencia no es angustiante, pues los tiburones nodriza no atacan a los seres humanos.

Otra de las actividades importantes a realizar en Cayo Ámbar Gris, es la pesca de sábalo, macabí y palometa.



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Belice

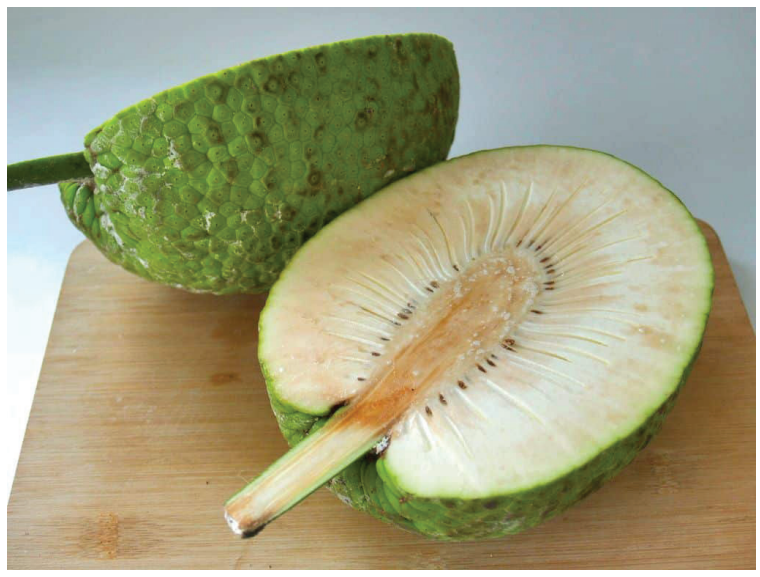
Belice, con sus coloridas ciudades y pueblos, sus islas y playas, es el único país ubicado en centro América en el que su lengua oficial es el inglés, no obstante, el español es hablado por más de la mitad de la población, al igual que el inglés criollo beliceño, la lengua garífuna, la lengua maya beliceña. Belice colinda con México y Guatemala.

El territorio actual del país ha estado poblado desde el 1500 a.C. por los mayas, posteriormente influido por los europeos desde 1492, en principio por los españoles, posteriormente por los británicos tras ganar la batalla de Cayo San Jorge en 1798. Aunque

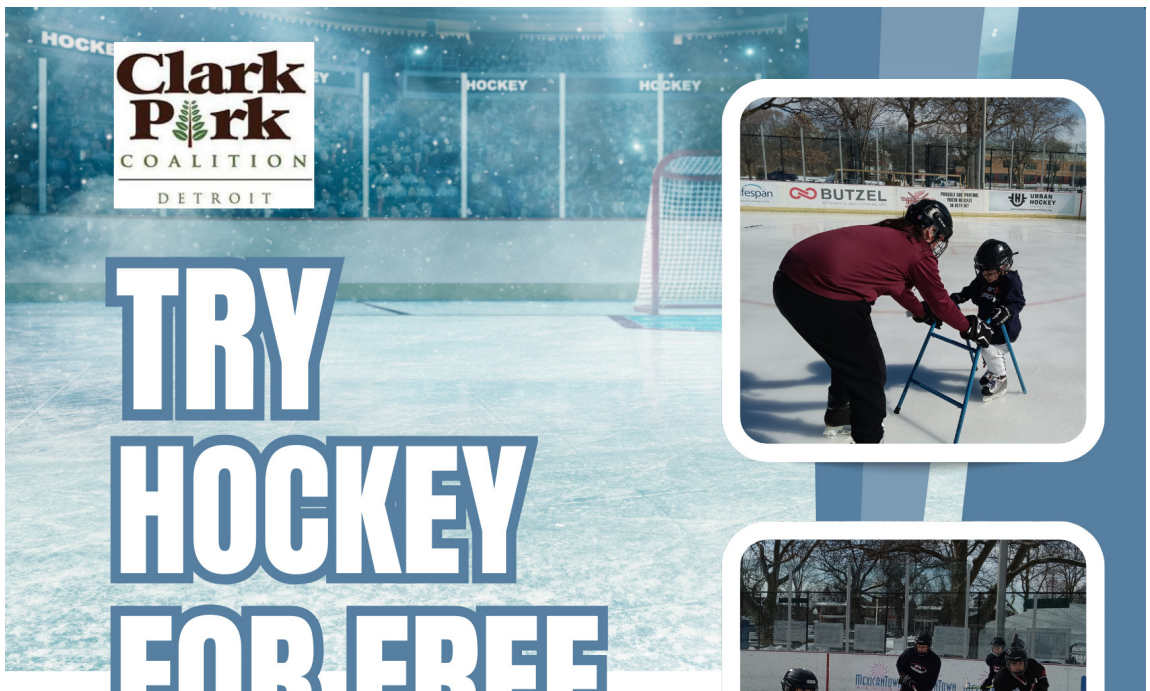
se considera un país independiente desde 1981, sigue perteneciendo a la Mancomunidad de las Naciones, lo que le hace depender de la monarquía británica.

Su capital era la Ciudad de Belice, donde se encuentra la catedral católica más importante del país, la Catedral del Santo Redentor, o bien, Holy Redeemer Cathedral. Aunque actualmente la capital es la ciudad de Belmopán.

Fruta del pan



La fruta de pan es un fruto de las regiones costeras y que en Belice se prepara de diferentes maneras, pues tiene una textura esponjosa almidonada que más parece a la de una papa. Se puede utilizar para preparar panes, pues se seca y se muele, haciendo con esta una harina. Se puede comer frita como una papa. Es un alimento básico en las regiones en que se da, debido a que se puede aprovechar el fruto en todas las etapas de su crecimiento.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